

# Fred Richards Repurpose Process

## Second Public Meeting

July 30, 2014



# Agenda

- **Steps in the process**
- **Overall schedule**
- **Common themes from Park Board and public outreach process**
- **Vision master plan overview (conceptual)**
- **Discussion**



# Steps in the Process

- **Starting Point: Council's decision to close the course**
- **Step 1: Create a set of principles and vision for the site – *based on findings from this public process*; Park Board and City Council set parameters for “highest and best public use” of the property as an outcome**
- **Step 2: Prepare a detailed master plan for the site consistent with the vision and City Council direction**
- **Step 3: Develop funding package**
- **Step 4: Prepare construction documents, bid project, and undertake construction**

# Overall Schedule

- **April 22: Award consultant contract**
- **June 12: Public Input Process Begins**
- **June 13 - end of July: Various stakeholder meetings**
- **June 21 and July 9 - Site walks (resident focus)**
- **July 30 – Second public open house**
  
- **August 4: Council work session**
- **August 11: Park Board work session**
  
- **August 12 - end of September – additional public input (dates to be determined based on findings from previous meetings)**

## Target Completion Timeline

- **October 6 – Review and Recommendation by Park Board**
- **October 21 – Review and Approval by City Council**



# Planning Context

- **Consensus: Fred Richards site should become a community park and serve a cross-section of residents**



# Park Board: Common Themes

- **Create a unique park experience focusing on getting children and families outdoors**
- **Provide a pleasant place for nearby businesses to use during work days**
- **Serve the park needs of the entire community, versus a select group or neighborhood**



# Park Board: Park Use Trends and Facility Demands

- **Sports fields – especially soccer and lacrosse; youth age groups**
- **New forms of recreation – be open to emerging forms of recreation that appeal to different age groups**
- **Urban agriculture – expanding on the community garden theme**
- **Outdoor adventure – provide unique and adventuresome play areas that go beyond typical play equipment**
- **Attract hard to reach groups – especially 15 to 18 year age group**
- **Develop the park for all seasons**

# Park Board (continued)

- Accommodate groups – repurpose clubhouse for flexible use; consider additional modest-sized shelters for group use
- Integrate the regional trail – consider a “bike library” (bikes, trikes, and other peddle-power vehicles for public use)
- Buffering – buffer views from both inside and outside park
- Provide adequate but not excessive parking – work with Pentagon Park developer to provide off-site shared parking
- Meet needs, but be cautious about overbuilding
  - Larger scale amenities such as community center, indoor athletic facilities, competitive pool, etc. are not well-suited for this park



# Public Outreach

- **Public process was open to all individuals and groups**
- **The public outreach process included:**
  - **Open public meetings (including comment cards)**
  - **Resident-focused site walks**
  - **Online comment forms**
  - **Speak Up, Edina!**
  - **Direct emails (to staff)**
  - **Interviews with the Pentagon Park developer**
  - **Interviews with a cross-section of nearby apartment owners and local businesses**
  - **Review of past surveys**
- ***Additional public comment will be sought as part of park system planning process***

# Common Themes from Public Outreach

- **Create a well-designed community park that serves all residents**
- **Provide for a diversity of uses – offering a friendly and inviting social environment**
- **Create a park that is unique and innovative – go beyond typical features to make the park more interesting**
- **Enhance natural qualities of the park – including the appearance of ponds and using more natural buffers**
- **Manage vehicular and pedestrian access – to ensure ease of access and limit disruption to established neighborhoods**

# Neighborhood-Related Issues

- Adequately buffer adjacent properties – naturalized buffer is preferred
- Prevent parking and vehicle access from disrupting the neighborhood
- Locate active use areas away from residential areas
- Keep the regional trail on the south side
- Limit pedestrian access from the north
- Limit lighting to critical areas – do not provide field lighting



# Local Businesses and Pentagon Park Developer

- **Consistent with the themes already described**
- **Seeking simple, well-designed features like trails, sitting areas, and picnic areas**
- **Easy access to small meeting spaces within the park would be beneficial**
- **Access to active recreational facilities is also important to encourage fitness and wellness**
- **Pentagon Park team engaged in process to ensure mutual understanding of issues and desired outcomes**





# Vision Master Plan Overview

- **Strives to find the right balance between active recreational uses and preserving open space and sense of place**
- **Provides a variety of recreational opportunities, but shows restraint in the size and location of the built footprint**
- **Approximately 35% of the park would be developed for active recreational uses, with 65% for passive, or “quiet,” forms of recreation, park trails, open space, agriculture, ponding areas, and buffers**

# Conceptual Vision Master Plan

- Recreational features envisioned for the park provide a well-rounded palette of activities for families and individuals to enjoy



# Parkway Corridor and Parking

- Ensures ease of access to the park from the south
- Allows for shared use of parking lots with adjacent commercial properties
- Creates an appealing buffer between the park and future commercial development
- Onsite parking will be provided to meet anticipated day-to-day use of the park
- Design will evolve as part of a coordinated effort with Pentagon Park development





# Regional Trail

- Serves a broad range of local and non-local users
- Located on the south side of the park to minimize potential for use conflicts
- Separated corridor helps alleviate concerns about overuse of internal park trails
- Trailhead facilities will be integrated into the park design





# Internal Park Trails

- **Park trails will be hard-surfaced for accessibility and durability, but the surface treatment could be different to distinguish them from the regional trail**
- **Internal park trails provide a stand-alone park amenity, along with access to the various park uses**
- **In contrast to the regional trail, these trails will have a more intimate and curvilinear character**



# Community Activities Area

- Focuses on repurposing the clubhouse and creating complementary outdoor spaces
- Accommodates a wide-range of activities and user groups, and provides an appealing place to spontaneously gather, socialize, and simply hang out
- Outdoor design features may include arbors, ornamental planting, benches, etc.; art pieces may also be part of the design theme
- Restrooms and possibly vending will be available to park users; warming house provided in winter



# Adventure Play Area

- **Robustly engages youth and teens in appealing non-programmed outdoor activities**
- **Provides a variety of play and outdoor adventure components for the very young through the 15-18 year old age groups**
- **Younger age groups – theme-based adventure-type play features; design creativity is critical to making this a feature that children will be eager to return to time and again**
- **Adding a splash pad can help take the play area to the next level**





# Adventure Play (continued)

- **Older age groups – provide a challenging outdoor adventure-based recreational area space; types of features include:**
  - ❑ **Slack lines**
  - ❑ **Bouldering rock and/or climbing wall**
  - ❑ **Ropes ladder and/or course, along with cargo nets**
  - ❑ **Balance logs or beams**
- **Repurposing part of the existing maintenance building as part of an indoor-outdoor adventure play area offers numerous possibilities**





# Field Games Area

- **Field games area covers approximately 6 acres; envisioned as a well-maintained green space for youth-oriented sports**
- **Field access, parking, and restrooms will all be on the south side; trees and natural buffers on the north side**
- **Accommodating other forms of established and/or emerging field games and activities is worth considering – Wiffleball, Futsal, Footvolley, and Puckelball**



# Urban Agriculture Area

- **Area for growing produce for personal consumption, food shelves, sold locally, or used for cooking classes**
- **Features include:**
  - **Fenced field area – 2 to 3 acres**
  - **Shed and shelter structure for storing equipment and organizing activities**
  - **Utility service – water, electricity, etc.**
  - **Maybe include three-season shelter for indoor/outdoor space for classes, farm-to-table events, and general group use**



# Open Parkland Area

- **Passive use (walking, sitting on a bench) is the focus, as is “quiet” active recreation (yoga, Frisbee, flying a kite)**
- **Key elements envisioned for this area include:**
  - **Curvilinear walking trails (separate from regional trail)**
  - **Sitting areas – includes shade structure, arbor, and/or vegetation**
  - **Lawn areas for casual recreation and informal play**
- **Physical features include ponds, expanded natural areas, and pockets of maintained lawn**





# Naturalized Buffers

- Naturalized buffers are envisioned along the northern property line
- Buffers mutually benefit park users and adjacent homeowners
- *Park user's perspective:* Preserve park's sense of place while walking along a trail, and to avoid feeling like you are intruding into someone's backyard
- *Homeowner's perspective:* Maintain a sense of privacy while still providing select views of the park





# Technical Considerations and Challenges

- **Poor site soils – which are prone to saturation and general instability**
- **Wetlands – all of the current ponds and waterways are protected; every attempt must be made to avoid displacing existing ponds and wetlands**
- **Water management issues complicate onsite stormwater and wetland protection issues; there is a need for additional stormwater management capacity throughout the watershed – including this site**



# Discussion

- **Comment on overall direction, plus thoughts on specific features or park uses, etc.**
  
- **Protocol:**
  - **Individual residents first**
  - **Local user groups second**
  - **Special interest groups third**

# Conceptual Vision Master Plan

- Recreational features envisioned for the park provide a well-rounded palette of activities for families and individuals to enjoy



# Additional Opportunities for Comment

**Fred Richards Repurpose webpage:**

**<http://edinamn.gov/fred-richards-repurpose>**